

**CITY COUNCIL WORK SESSION
CITY OF WATERTOWN
February 10, 2016
6:00 p.m.**

Mayor Joseph M. Butler, Jr. Presiding

Present: Council Member Cody J. Horbacz
Council Member Stephen A. Jennings
Council Member Teresa R. Macaluso
Council Member Mark C. Walczyk
Mayor Butler

Also Present: Sharon Addison, City Manager

City staff present: Justin Wood, Michael Lumbis, Kenneth Mix, Jeffrey Hammond, Geoffrey Urda

DISCUSSION

Arsenal Street Bridge Replacement Project

Mayor Butler started the discussion by introducing Thomas King, Assistant Design Engineer with the Department of Transportation, David Hart Project Supervisor, Department of Transportation and Jeffrey Grill, Region 7 Structures, Department of Transportation. Mr. Grill presented a slide show with a history of the Arsenal Street Bridge. The bridge was constructed in 1953 and is nearing the end of its service life. The last major rehabilitation was in 1971 and the deck was replaced and substructures were repaired below the bridge. At that time traffic was controlled by staged construction and Cedar and Exchange streets were closed. Mr. Grill noted that in 1971 a projected traffic volume was made and the projected time through 2005 was very close to what the volume currently is. He informed Council that there have been numerous contract paintings done to the bridge over the years and also repairs on the deck most recently in 2010. The structural deck has been safety flagged in the past for areas of deteriorated concrete, mainly caused by water and salt chewing on the concrete. He continued the presentation by showing slides of the bridge over the years and the different stages of its development. He said that by law there has to be a bridge clearnace of 22 feet but they prefer to have 23 feet. He informed Council that the only feasible and prudent alternative that best meets the project is to replace the existing bridge.

Discussion then revolved around Work Zone Traffic Control (WZTC) and the three options being considered for the project which are Off Site Detour, On Site Diversion and Stage Construction. Currently the use of an On-Site Diversion is the preferred option. This option would use a 4 lane temporary bridge with a sidewalk next to the existing bridge to retain the required flow.

Mr. King explained that the use of Stage Construction which would close half of the existing bridge while using the remaining half to carry traffic, and then switching traffic to the new half of the bridge while completing the second half of the bridge is not feasible and would create excessive delays and congestion on Route 3. He then informed Council that several options for an Off-Site Detour were analyzed and these were dismissed for various reasons. The use of Coffeen Street and Bradley Street were investigated and it was determined that neither of these streets are capable of accommodating the

increase in traffic. The alternative of creating a new grade crossing using Waterman Drive and West Mullin Street was investigated and dismissed due to the extensive cost and safety concerns at the intersections along Mullin Street. He pointed out that currently the preferred WZTC alternative is to maintain traffic on site with the use of a 4 lane temporary bridge with a sidewalk. The final decision will not be selected until an evaluation of the comments on the draft design and from the public meeting are completed.

Mr. Grill stressed to Council that the bridge is safe but advised that now is the time to take care of it before it gets worse. He drew Council's attention to slides of the damage and wear and tear of the bridge. He summarized the damage and expressed concern that in time concrete could begin to fall and possibly land on cars driving under the bridge.

Mayor Butler asked if they paint the beams on a regular basis.

Mr. Grill said they paint them on a 12 year cycle. Currently they will not paint them since the project will be starting and they do not want to spend money on the paint.

Mayor Butler asked if there will be a designated bicycle route.

Mr. Grill replied that was correct but that they are not proposing bicycle lanes yet. He added that NYS is not allowed to accommodate bicycles on sidewalks.

Mayor Butler expressed concern that it should be safe for pedestrians and bicyclists during the project and after. He also pointed out how dangerous it is in the winter when the plows push the snow onto the sidewalks making it hard for pedestrians to walk safely on the bridge.

Mr. Grill told Council that they can take another look at providing bicycle lanes on the bridge.

Council and DOT staff discussed the many options to consider for the temporary bridge and detour routes. The approximate cost of the temporary bridge is \$1,500,000 with an approximate cost of \$9,000,000 for the whole project. The environmental impacts also have to be considered and examples were given such as cutting trees down and effects on wetlands.

After further discussion the anticipated schedule for the project is as follows:

Design Approval – Spring 2016

Right - of - way Acquisitions – Summer 2016

Construction Begins – Summer 2019

Project Completion – Fall 2020

CDBG Consolidated Plan and Annual Action Plan Discussion. Kenneth A. Mix, Planning and Community Development Coordinator, Michael Lumbis, Planner

Mr. Lumbis started the presentation with a slideshow and an explanation of the presentation which included an overview of the program, eligible activities, the 2016 schedule, previous projects, 2016-2020 consolidated plan and the 2016 budget. He briefed Council about the history of CDBG noting that it started back in 1979 under the title of Small Cities Program which was funded thru NYS. He stated that at that time there were over 27 grants totaling over 13 million dollars. Starting in 2014, the City

became an Entitlement Community. Mr. Lumbis explained that the annual funds come directly from HUD and there is not competition. He went on to say that even though there is no competition, there is still a lot of work to do to get the money. The City has to have a Consolidated Plan every 5 years, an Annual Action Plan, a Consolidated Annual Performance and Evaluation Report, administer the program according to Federal Regulations and finally to spend the money in a timely manner. Mr. Lumbis informed Council that all CDBG funds must benefit low and moderate income persons, aid in the prevention or elimination of slums and meet a need having a particular urgency. He added that 70% of the funds must be spent on the low to moderate income persons.

Mayor Butler questioned if 70% of the funding has to be spent on low to moderate income, how is it validated that the persons are of low to moderate income.

Mr. Mix drew Council's attention to a slide on the LMI (Low Moderate Income) Categories which is based on the family size. He explained that at least 51% of the beneficiaries have to be LMI and that the activities are designed to create or retain permanent jobs.

Mr. Lumbis gave an example using the sidewalk program, explaining that the beneficiaries of the sidewalk would be based on the neighborhood or target areas. Discussion then turned to some of the eligible activities that CDBG provide, including housing which provide homeowner assistance, owner occupied rehabilitation, rental rehabilitation, housing services such as counseling, energy auditing and inspections; Public Facilities and Improvements which assist libraries, parks and playgrounds; Infrastructure improvements such as sidewalks, water and sewer lines, and facilities for persons with special needs such as homeless or domestic shelters, nursing homes and group homes for the disabled. Other Real Property Activities which are not limited to historic preservation, code enforcement, demolition, acquisition, disposition, lead paint evaluation, handicapped accessibility, energy efficiency and brownfields. He then summarized that public services are limited to 15% and it must be a new service. He then explained to Council that the Ineligible Activities include any activity not specifically authorized by the regulations, buildings for the general conduct of government, general government expenses, financing for political activities, purchase of equipment, purchase of personal property, operating and maintenance expenses, new housing construction and income payments.

Mr. Mix stressed that the City was advised to use caution when choosing businesses to assist. He pointed out that if a business does not provide jobs and they are not documented, the City will be on the hook for the money.

Mr. Lumbis summarized the Planning and Administration portion and that it is limited to 20% of the funding.

Mayor Butler asked if the City is using the whole 20%. Mr. Mix said the City is using about 10% but will have a more accurate account closer to the new fiscal year. He explained that it is basically documenting staff time and the hours that are spent on CDBG activities. He pointed out that the City spends about 25% of time on CDBG projects, and that it will most likely add up to approximately \$60,000.

Mr. Lumbis told Council that the City must submit a 5 year consolidated plan covering the program years 2016-2020 and an Annual Action Plan by May 15th. Also a Consolidated Annual Performance and Evaluation (CAPER) by September 30th and the City must close out grants from prior years (2014-2015)

Mr. Lumbis then summarized the 2016-2020 Draft Goals and Projects. He informed Council that in the Fall they started the Accessible Ramp Project which will replace and rehabilitate the sidewalk ramps.

Mayor Butler asked how it is determined which ones get replaced.

Mr. Lumbis said that DPW identifies the ones in need.

Ms. Addison pointed out that the City has to have them at every intersection. She also asked if the CDBG would fund the Crime Impact Program.

Mr. Lumbis said he would look into it.

Council Member Horbacz asked how much a bus shelter is.

Geoffrey Urda, City Planner, stated that they are roughly around \$5,000 and he explained that DPW presented the 10 busiest bus stops and that 7 of them are CDBG eligible. The top 5 locations for bus shelters are Kelsey Creek Apartments, Skyline Apartments, Creekwood Apartments, Samaritan Keep and Woodruff Street.

Mayor Butler said that he is pleased with the goals that are being set forth.

Work session ended at 8:20 p.m.

Motion was made by Council Member Stephen Jennings to move into Executive Session to discuss the employment history of a certain individual.

Motion was seconded by Council Member Teresa Macaluso and carried with all voting in favor thereof.

Council moved into Executive Session at 8:20 pm

Council reconvened at 9:14 pm

ADJOURNMENT

At the call of the chair, meeting was duly adjourned at 9:14 p.m. by motion of Council Member Stephen Jennings seconded by Council Member Teresa Macaluso and carried with all voting in favor thereof.

Margaret M. Puccia
Deputy Clerk